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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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mm Docket 92-268

IN REPLY REFER TO:

2 FEB 1993

8310-MEA
CN9300187

RECEIVED

FEB - 5 1993

Honorable John Breaux
United States Senate
516 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Breaux:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Thank you for your letter on behalf of Linda Wheeler of Lake Charles, Louisiana. Your constituent objects to rate increases by her local cable television operator.

The Commission has a clear understanding that Congress adopted the Cable Act of 1992 to constrain unreasonable cable rates. The Commission is in the process of formulating rules implementing the rate provisions of the law and is seeking public comment on those provisions that address rate rollbacks, refunds, and evasions of statutory requirements. The Commission will attempt to implement these provisions faithfully, and will consider the conduct of the cable industry during the interim period in deciding what kind of regulation is needed.

Your constituent's letter will be placed in the record of this proceeding so that the Commission can be mindful of her concerns during its deliberations. I trust that the foregoing and the enclosures are informative.

Sincerely,

Roy J. Stewart

Roy J. Stewart
Chief, Mass Media Bureau

Enclosures

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Congressional

CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING SYSTEM
01/22/93

LETTER REPORT

CONTROL NO.	DATE RECEIVED	DATE OF CORRESP	DATE DUE	DATE DUE OLA(857)
9300187	01/22/93	01/12/93	02/04/93	

TITLE	MEMBERS NAME	REPLY FOR SIG OF
Senator	John Breaux	BC

CONSTITUENT'S NAME	SUBJECT
Linda Wheeler	inq. re: rate regulation & 92 Cable Act

REF TO	REF TO	REF TO	REF TO
MMB	<i>Erf</i>	<i>CHI</i>	

DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE
01/22/93	<i>1-25-93</i>	<i>1-25</i>	

REMARKS: Respond to the attention of Celeste Coco.

25 JAN REC'D

John Breaux
Louisiana

Committees:
Commerce, Science, and
Transportation
Finance
Special Committee on Aging

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1803

*MMB
catv-rates
187*

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January 12, 1993

Ms. Linda T. Solheim
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, 808
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Solheim:

Enclosed to you is a copy of information sent to me by Ms. Linda Wheeler.

Please investigate the information and provide me with a report. Your comments should be forwarded to my Washington, D.C. office to the attention of Celeste Coco.

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Sincerely,



JOHN BREAUX
United States Senator

JB/cc
Enclosure

December 21, 1992

Honorable John Breaux, Senator
197 Dirksen
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

1992 DEC 28 PM 2: 55

RE: Cable Rates

Dear Senator Breaux,

I have just received notification from Video Design (our local cable company) that their monthly rates will increase from \$23.95 to \$25.50, effective January 1. Since they had campaigned vigorously against the recent cable legislation and warned the legislation would cause rates to increase, I was not terribly surprised about their move. But I sincerely hope that something can be done soon to force this company, and others who are milking their customers' pocketbooks, to provide services at reasonable rates.

When I first subscribed to basic cable in 1980, the monthly rate was \$8.25. That rate included CNN, CNN Headline News, TBS, HSE, ESPN, USA and others. After the deregulation of cable, the cable company pulled a fast one--they split off ESPN, HSE, CNN, CNN Headline News, USA and a number of other channels that had been previously included in the basic rate, put them into a "Basic Plus" package, for about \$5.00 additional charge per month, and lowered the rate of the plain vanilla "Basic" (local area channels plus TBS and C-Span). Of course, in order to get the "Basic Plus" package, one must first subscribe to the "Basic" package. I have subscribed to the Basic Plus package since it was initiated, but because the content of the Basic and Basic Plus is essentially the same as the original Basic package, the combined rates for both must be used to demonstrate the rate increases over the last 12 years.

Following is a list of the rate increases from 1980 to date:

10/80 -	\$ 8.25	03/88 -	\$13.95
10/81 -	\$10.25	02/89 -	\$16.95
07/84 -	\$10.95	10/89 -	\$19.95
07/85 -	\$11.45	01/91 -	\$21.95
01/86 -	\$11.95	01/92 -	\$23.75
		01/93 -	\$25.50

This represents over a 300% increase in cable rates since 1980. During the first seven years represented above, cable rates increased by 45%; during the last 5 years, they have increased by 113%. I can think of no other service or product that has increased at this rate in the same time period. The service is no better than it ever was--there are frequent outages that last several hours at a time, the reception is seldom as good as we can receive local channels with an antenna, some channels are consistently poor, you can hardly call the cable office without getting a busy signal, and when you complain to them about their service, they are rude.

Please do anything you can to help cable consumers like me from continuing to be ripped off.

Sincerely,



Linda Wheeler
Rt. 7, Box 928
Lake Charles, LA 70611